

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 14

NEW YORK POST  
8 July 1985

# Soviet 'old guard' finally fades away

THE Reagan administration believes the era of paralysis in Soviet Union foreign policy finally is over.

The President's advisers are hoping to move rapidly in the next few months to use the departure of the last of the Kremlin's "old guard," as a way to gain movement on arms control.

Senior administration officials say it was no coincidence that stone-faced Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko was "kicked upstairs" to the non-powerful, largely ceremonial position of president during the same week that new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to a summit meeting with President Reagan.

The fact that the first summit meeting since 1979 has been scheduled has given Reagan and his advisers hope, for the first time, that the Kremlin may want to start talking seriously about the range of problems confronting the two superpowers.

Officials believe that Gorbachev, with the removal of Gromyko, has put the final pieces in place to assume total command of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Gorbachev, without the roadblock of Gromyko's rigid domination over foreign policy, should be able to make the kind of sweeping changes necessary, if an arms control agreement can be reached.

The evidence is clear. Gromyko's replacement, Eduard Shevardnadze, is clearly "Gorbachev's man," say U.S. officials.

The all-powerful defense ministry, which long has been the most hardline faction regarding relations with the West, has been weakened as a result of the death of Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov and the fall from grace of Marshal Nikolai Orgarkov.

Gorbachev's chief rival for the Kremlin leadership, Grigori Romanov — whom officials described as a Stalinist, — also was ousted last week.



## INSIDE WASHINGTON

By Niles Latham

This gives Gorbachev the freedom to operate without having his hands tied by hardliners.

Gorbachev's new-found ability to put the Soviet decision-making process on a fast track does not necessarily mean that relations with the U.S. will improve soon, Reagan advisers caution.

The same day the summit was announced, the Soviet Union also announced that Gorbachev would be traveling to France only one month before his meeting with Reagan.

The U.S. took this as an ominous sign that Gorbachev is trying to exploit the differences between the U.S. and France that were so evident at the seven-nation economic summit last spring.

Officials fear the Soviets may attempt to lure the Socialist government of Francois Mitterrand away from NATO.

U.S. intelligence analysts believe that the move toward France may be the first step in a new campaign by Gorbachev to enhance the Soviet Union's image abroad.

Such a campaign would be aimed at weakening Reagan's image and possibly at causing new problems in Europe, Nicaragua, the Philippines and

the Mideast.

To counter this plan of attack, Reagan advisers are still considering a plan to concentrate on Gorbachev's main preoccupation in the five months since he became Soviet leader — the overwhelming financial problems confronting the Soviet Union.

National Security Council officials were quick to point out one of the few things known about Gromyko's successor, Shevardnadze. While he was head of the Communist Party in Soviet Georgia, he was an open advocate of the kind of free-market reforms that Gorbachev has been pushing.

As Reagan prepares for his first face-to-face showdown with a Soviet leader, Secretary of State George Shultz and many other experts will be pushing him to use his economic weapons — including the promise to help bring the Soviet economy into the 21st century — as a way of getting Gorbachev to start bargaining an end to the arms race.

★ ★ ★